



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Muller
SERIAL NO.: 09/574,277
FILED: May 19, 2000

ART UNIT: 2833
EXAMINER: Harvey, J.

TITLE: Electrical Plug Connector Particularly For Automotive Applications

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: 502-009444-US (PAR)

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231
P.O Box: AF

Sir:

This is in response to the Office Action mailed August 28, 2001.
Claims 1-9 remain in the application.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shuey et al. (4,477,022). The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejection.

Claim 1 recites that the bayonet ring (2) can be pushed on the plug housing (23) until at least one locking device of the bayonet ring (2) interlocks with the plug housing (23).

Shuey et al. (4,477,022) discloses a connector having a plug (12) that has a housing member (16) and the receptacle (14) that has a housing (64). A metal coupling ring (82) is rotatable

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relative to housing (64) and has threads (84) for engagement with threads (24) of housing (16) to couple the connector. The metal coupling ring (82) must be rotated to provide mating between the plug (12) and receptacle (14) (see Column 3, lines 22 - 27).

In the Response to Arguments section on page 4 of the Office Action, it appears that the Examiner has indicated agreement with Applicant as to the inability to push the metal ring of Shuey et al. over the threads absent rotation of the metal ring. This is consistent with Applicants position that no where in Shuey et al. is there a disclosure or suggestion of locking the connector with a bayonet ring that can be pushed on the plug housing until at least one locking device of the bayonet ring interlocks with the plug housing as claimed in the present invention. The threads on the metal ring in Shuey et al. specifically prevent the metal ring from being *pushed on the plug housing until at least one locking device of the bayonet ring interlocks with the plug housing* as claimed in the present invention (*interlocks* as claimed; not just contacts the housing as indicated by the Examiner in the Response to Arguments section on page 4 of the Office Action). Merely pushing the metal coupling ring on the housing in Shuey et al., causes the threads to contact the housing, not *interlock* with the housing as claimed in the present invention. In Shuey et al., threads 24 and threads 84 (see figure 2) are disclosed as a screw locking system only, and not disclosed or suggested as a locking system where pushing has any effect as claimed in claim 1. The features of claim 1 are neither disclosed nor suggested by Shuey et al.

(4,477,022). Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over Shuey et al. (4,477,022).

Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shuey et al. (4,477,022), in view of Clark et al. (5,913,691). Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 and therefor include all the limitations of claim 1. The features of claims 4 and 5 are neither disclosed nor suggested nor made obvious by Shuey et al. (4,477,022) in view of Clark et al. (5,913,691). Accordingly, for the reasons regarding claim 1, claims 4 and 5 are patentable over Shuey et al. (4,477,022) in view of Clark et al. (5,913,691).

A check in the amount of \$110.00 is enclosed for a one month extension of time and on account of the additional claim fees. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.



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For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' Attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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12-03-01

Date

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this amendment in response to the PTO Office Action dated August 28, 2001 is being deposited with the United States Postal Service today as first class mail addressed to Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

12/3/01

Date

Name of Person Making Deposit